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Proposed strategic framework for the period 2008-2009

Part two: biennial programme plan

Programme 22
Humanitarian assistance

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Overall orientation

22.1 The overall purpose of the programme is to ensure the timely, coherent and coordinated response of the international community to disasters and emergencies and to facilitate the smooth transition from emergency relief to rehabilitation and development. The legislative authority and mandate for the programme are derived from General Assembly resolution 46/182, in which the Assembly reaffirmed the guiding principles of humanitarian assistance and reinforced earlier decisions and resolutions adopted by it and the Economic and Social Council concerning humanitarian assistance and the leadership role of the Secretary-General in responding to natural disasters and humanitarian emergencies. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is responsible for the implementation of the programme and the achievement of its objectives.

22.2 The strategy for implementing the programme is based on the need for the development and promotion of a common policy on humanitarian issues for the United Nations system and its partners; the mobilization and coordination of assistance in complex emergencies and disasters; the development and mobilization of United Nations capacity to expedite the provision of international humanitarian assistance; the promotion of natural disaster reduction; advocacy of humanitarian issues; and the availability of timely information on emergencies and natural disasters to facilitate global humanitarian assistance. The principal responsibility for the implementation of disaster reduction activities resides with the Inter-agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), while responsibility for the transition from relief to rehabilitation and development also involves organizations participating in the United Nations Development Group.

Subprogramme 1
Policy and analysis

Objective of the Organization: to ensure strategic and operational coherence of humanitarian response through the development of a structured policy and guidance framework

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement
(a) Improved coordination within the United Nations system in response to disasters and emergencies	(a) The number of agreements adopted by the Inter-agency Standing Committee on appropriate standards to improve coordination mechanisms and structures at Headquarters and in the field
(b) Improved planning, monitoring and accountability during disasters and emergency situations, including the transitional phase from relief to development	(b) The number of inter-agency evaluation recommendations implemented by humanitarian agencies
(c) Improved capacity and policy responses by United Nations humanitarian coordinators for the protection of civilians	(c) (i) The number of guidelines developed on the protection of civilians

(ii) Increased number of United Nations humanitarian and resident coordinators trained in protection of civilian issues

Strategy

22.3 Substantive responsibility for this subprogramme is vested in the Policy Development and Studies Branch in New York.

22.4 The Branch will continue to develop a humanitarian policy that identifies emerging humanitarian trends and changes in the humanitarian environment in order to build harmonized policy positions among humanitarian agencies based on international humanitarian law, humanitarian principles, including those recognized in resolution 46/182, and human rights.

22.5 It will foster strategic and operational coherence through the development of a structured policy and guidance framework for use by humanitarian coordinators, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs field offices and the broader humanitarian system. The Branch will also lead the development of inter-agency policies, guidance and analytical tools. It will develop aides-memoires and diagnostic tools for political actors, such as Member States and peacekeepers, to use during crisis management to help ensure consideration of key humanitarian concerns. In addition, it will contribute to the development of training programmes and standard operating procedures to ensure that staff and other actors in emergencies are aware of key humanitarian policies, methodologies and processes and are able to apply them flexibly and appropriately in varied contexts. The Branch will help identify best practice and innovative concepts that should be disseminated widely to inform and guide policy, operational decisions and crisis management.

22.6 Moreover, the Branch will support and promote the efforts of Governments of affected countries, upon their request, and those of other agencies, with the approval of the Government concerned, to assist and protect internally displaced persons. Support will be given to the establishment of effective planning capacity for the management of the transition from relief to reconstruction and development. In addition, efforts will be made to ensure that lessons learned from past experience are applied to the strengthening of future humanitarian assistance activities. The secretariat of the Inter-agency Standing Committee will provide support to the Committee in its efforts to ensure a well-coordinated international response to humanitarian crises and should conduct regular briefings with Member States on its activities.

Subprogramme 2
Coordination of humanitarian action and emergency response

Objective of the Organization: to ensure a coherent and timely humanitarian response to alleviate human suffering in natural disaster and complex emergencies

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement
(a) Provision of timely and coordinated support to all United Nations operational agencies engaged in the response to humanitarian emergencies	(a) The establishment of coordination mechanisms in the field as well as at Headquarters, including the deployment of humanitarian coordination personnel in the field at the onset of an emergency, within five days
(b) Increased availability of extrabudgetary resources for humanitarian activities	(b) (i) Increased ratio of contributions received from donors to requirements identified in the consolidated appeals process (ii) Increased ratio of contributions received unearmarked from donors improving the flexibility of funding
(c) Progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective in strategies for emergency response	(c) Increased percentage of instances where needs of women are effectively addressed through common humanitarian action plans
(d) Humanitarian actions by the United Nations system are properly coordinated and integrated with political, security and peacekeeping initiatives	(d) (i) The number of political, security and peacekeeping initiatives that take into account humanitarian perspectives (ii) The umber of up-to-date United Nations country team contingency plans
(e) Timely and coordinated use of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) in countries with emerging and protracted emergencies	(e) (i) The average amount of CERF funding received and available for disbursement to humanitarian crises (ii) The prompt availability of CERF funds in the field office for an emergency crisis
(f) Timely mobilization and coordination of international assistance to countries affected by natural disasters	(f) International assistance is provided to the affected country within 48 hours following the request for international assistance by the affected country

Strategy

22.7 Within the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, substantive responsibility for the subprogramme is vested with the Coordination and Response Division, which was created in 2004 from the integration of the former

Humanitarian Emergency Branch in New York and the Response Coordination Branch in Geneva.

22.8 The Coordination and Response Division will provide day-to-day analysis and advice on complex emergencies and natural disasters through its link to resident and humanitarian coordinators and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs field coordination units worldwide; support the interaction of the Under-Secretary-General/Emergency Relief Coordinator with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, the political, peacekeeping and security arms of the Secretariat, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations; provide inputs to and monitor all Security Council deliberations on issues with humanitarian implications; represent the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in relevant United Nations interdepartmental or inter-agency forums dealing with crisis management; provide analysis and recommendations for consideration by the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs, as well as other United Nations executive committees; enhance preparedness in countries at risk of crisis through support to contingency planning, lead or participate in inter-agency and interdepartmental assessment missions and offer the United Nations system information and advice on a timely basis with respect to humanitarian assistance activities, in strict conformity with the principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality, as contained in resolution 46/182.

22.9 The Division will also provide support to resident and humanitarian coordinators in the field to ensure effective field-based coordination; aim at the timely mobilization and coordination of international assistance to countries affected by emergencies through strengthened cooperation between assisting and recipient countries; activate international disaster response mechanisms to facilitate international relief assistance; provide support to Member States and international response networks to ensure improved coordination in crisis management; facilitate, where appropriate, field-based strategic planning for the common humanitarian action plans of the United Nations; draw up appeals to solicit support from the donor community for humanitarian action by the United Nations system and partners and reinforce services to field offices through greater participation in the inter-agency structure and management of the regional disaster response advisers; strengthen partnerships through the efficient and systematic monitoring of the implementation of policies and programmes; contribute to the analysis of issues related to access security; and analyse emergencies and lessons learned.

22.10 Finally, the Division will be actively involved in the implementation of the humanitarian reform initiated in 2005 to: (a) create more predictable humanitarian finances to ensure and enable a prompt response to new or rapidly deteriorating crises, in particular through the new Central Emergency Response Fund; (b) strengthen response capacity by establishing a system of cluster leads in those areas of activity where there are clearly identified gaps; and (c) strengthen the Humanitarian Coordinator system to better support field coordination.

Subprogramme 3
Natural disaster reduction

Objective of the Organization: to reduce vulnerability to natural hazards and ensure effective international support to reduce the impact of disasters

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement
(a) Increased national capacities for reducing disaster risk	(a) (i) Increased number of development frameworks and policies adopted at the national level that include elements of disaster risk assessment (ii) Increased number of countries adopting national programmes to implement disaster risk reduction strategies
(b) Increased awareness and commitment to implement the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters	(b) (i) Increased number of countries, regional and international organizations and other stakeholders reporting on progress in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (ii) Number of national coordination mechanisms and platforms established
(c) Increased national capacities for post-disaster recovery planning at all levels	(c) (i) Increased number of knowledge products (tools, methodologies, case studies, training curricula) produced by national Governments (ii) Increased number of countries incorporating disaster-reduction measures into post-disaster recovery operations
(d) Increased level of donor support for disaster reduction and recovery programmes and projects	(d) Increased number of disaster-reduction and recovery programmes and projects funded

Strategy

22.11 Substantive responsibility for the subprogramme is vested in the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and its secretariat, as the focal point for disaster risk reduction within the United Nations system.

22.12 The World Conference on Disaster Reduction adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters (see A/CONF.206/6), setting out strategic goals, priorities of action and implementation and follow-up activities within a strengthened International Strategy for Disaster Reduction system. The focus of the subprogramme has been realigned to meet the expected outcome of the Hyogo Framework for Action, following a two-fold strategy to achieve its objective concurrent with the focus of activities with the

two participating organizations, namely, the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery.

22.13 The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat will continue to act as a facilitating body and "honest broker" in respect of policy coordination, advocacy, information provision, regional outreach and resource mobilization. It will facilitate coherence and team efforts towards the implementation of the Hyogo Framework at all levels, with a special emphasis on the United Nations system. Those efforts will include the servicing of the governance mechanisms of the International Strategy system, namely, the Management Oversight Board, the Global Platform for Disaster Reduction and its Programme Advisory Committee. The secretariat will also continue to raise the visibility and level of commitment to disaster risk reduction and continue to strengthen its regional presence to work closely with regional partners to provide more effective support to Governments. Finally, the secretariat will increase its efforts to promote cooperation among international organizations and networks to develop consistent data collection and forecasting on natural hazards, vulnerabilities and risks, and disaster impacts, including the continued development of a global disaster risk reduction information platform. Through its network of country offices, UNDP will continue to support the development and implementation of disaster risk reduction programmes and projects at the regional and national levels. A major thrust of UNDP/Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery work will be devoted to the production of tools for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in development and recovery planning in order to empower other partners to reduce disaster risk. These tools are supported by a capacity enhancement effort started in 2006 to put in place national advisers in high-risk countries. Capacity-building support will include risk analysis and monitoring; policy and programme formulation, implementation and evaluation; advocacy and resource mobilization; and training and learning for human resource development. A particularly relevant result sought through the work of the two organizations is increased investment in disaster risk reduction, expressed by an increased number of disaster-reduction and recovery projects funded by donors or other partners.

Subprogramme 4
Emergency support services

Objective of the Organization: to expedite international humanitarian assistance to victims of emergencies and natural disasters, including environmental disasters and technological accidents

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement
(a) Prompt mobilization of international emergency response mechanisms and tools to facilitate international humanitarian assistance to victims of disasters and emergencies, including the identification of resource requirements and timely dissemination of information	(a) International assistance and resources are provided to affected country within 48 hours following the request for international assistance by the affected country

(b) Enhanced capacity and preparedness of national and international emergency/disaster management networks and partnerships in order to respond to disasters and emergencies	(b) Increased number of national and international partnerships and networks that can respond effectively to disasters and emergencies
(c) Heightened awareness of gender mainstreaming in disaster-assessment reports and appeal documents	(c) Percentage of situation reports issued during every major disaster that reflect the impact on the gender perspective

Strategy

22.14 Substantive responsibility for the subprogramme is vested in the Emergency Services Branch in Geneva.

22.15 Support will be provided to disaster-affected countries through the strengthening of mechanisms for emergency response; the promotion of the membership of developing and disaster-prone countries in emergency response networks; the development and strengthening of the response capacities of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; and the improvement of mechanisms, instruments and procedures for the mobilization and coordination of international assistance in case of natural disasters and complex emergencies. In addition, support will be provided through the increased involvement of potential recipient and donor countries, using a regional approach, as well as United Nations agencies, in relevant activities, including training and exercise programmes and capacity-building for response preparedness.

22.16 Emphasis will be placed on ensuring the timely dissemination of information on the situation in countries affected by emergencies and disasters, including the identification of resource requirements, to humanitarian and other partners; activating emergency and disaster-response tools to reduce their impact; expanding the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination team in different regions; standardizing operational procedures for international urban search and rescue teams; further developing a comprehensive network of partners, comprising Governments, United Nations agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and corporate actors; and strengthening national and regional civil-military and military-military coordination for more efficient and coherent support to international humanitarian relief operations, inter alia, through the United Nations civil/military coordination training programme. Emphasis will also be placed on increasing the extent to which acute environmental impacts of disasters are identified and addressed during the response phase as well as strengthening coordination in the field of humanitarian logistics through expanded cooperation with relevant partners.

Subprogramme 5
Humanitarian emergency information and advocacy

Objective of the Organization: to ensure effective advocacy of humanitarian principles on behalf of populations affected by disasters and emergencies and strengthen systems for the provision of timely and reliable information in support of humanitarian decision-making and response

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement
(a) Enhanced awareness and regard for humanitarian principles and concerns	(a) Increased media coverage that refers to humanitarian principles and actions
(b) Increased utilization of timely, accurate and relevant information on humanitarian emergency situations	(b) (i) Increased number of users (subscribers) of information made available through the Integrated Regional Information Networks
	(ii) Increased number of page views of information made available through ReliefWeb

Strategy

22.17 Substantive responsibility for this subprogramme rests with the Advocacy and Information Management Branch.

22.18 Advocacy being a core mandate of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Branch will enhance partnerships with United Nations departments and agencies, non-governmental organizations, Member States, regional organizations and other stakeholders in order to increase the commitment and support to humanitarian action globally. The Branch will further strengthen public information and media relations capacities at Headquarters and in the field in order to raise awareness of the plight and needs of civilians affected by conflicts and natural disasters and promote adherence to international humanitarian law and principles. It will also undertake outreach and targeted campaigns, in concert with its partners, to focus attention on specific humanitarian crises and issues.

22.19 Another vital aspect of the subprogramme is to provide timely and reliable information on unfolding emergencies and natural disasters in order to inform decision-making and support humanitarian action on the ground. The Branch will further strengthen the systems for collection, analysis, dissemination and sharing of humanitarian information through expanded networks, coverage and reach. This includes updating and improving its principal websites, namely OCHA-Online and ReliefWeb, as well as the Integrated Regional Information Networks, its independent field-based humanitarian news service. Partnerships with other members of the humanitarian community for information-sharing, coordination and standardization will be further enhanced.

22.20 The Branch will also provide early warning information with regard to preventive and preparedness measures and will continue to provide secretariat and technical support to the United Nations inter-agency framework for coordination teams.

Legislative mandates

Programme 22
Humanitarian assistance

General Assembly resolutions

46/182	Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations
47/120 A and B	An Agenda for Peace: preventive diplomacy and related matters
52/12	Renewing the United Nations: a programme for reform
53/192	Triennial policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system
59/212	International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development
60/1	2005 World Summit Outcome
60/123	Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel
60/124	Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Economic and Social Council resolutions

1999/1	Special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance
2005/4	Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Security Council resolutions

1674 (2006)	Protection of civilians in armed conflict

Subprogramme 1
Policy and analysis

General Assembly resolutions

56/89	Scope of legal protection under the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel
58/118	Participation of volunteers, "White Helmets", in the activities of the United Nations in the field of humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and technical cooperation for development
59/171	New international humanitarian order

60/128	Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa
60/168	Protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons

Subprogramme 2
Coordination of humanitarian action and emergency response

General Assembly resolutions

56/112	Emergency assistance to the Sudan
57/103	Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and rehabilitation in Tajikistan
57/148	Humanitarian assistance to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
58/24	Emergency humanitarian assistance to Ethiopia
58/26	Emergency humanitarian assistance to Malawi
58/27 A and B	Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan and the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security
58/115	Assistance for humanitarian relief and the economic and social rehabilitation of Somalia
58/119	Strengthening of international cooperation and coordination of efforts to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster
59/112 B	Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan
59/137	Assistance to survivors of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, particularly orphans, widows and victims of sexual violence
59/171	New international humanitarian order
59/214	Assistance to Mozambique
59/215	Humanitarian and special economic assistance to Serbia and Montenegro
59/216	International assistance for the economic rehabilitation of Angola
59/219	Assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Liberia
60/128	Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa
60/126	Assistance to the Palestinian people
60/216	International cooperation and coordination for the human and ecological rehabilitation and economic development of the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan

60/217 Economic assistance for the reconstruction and development of Djibouti

60/218 Humanitarian assistance and rehabilitation for Ethiopia

60/219 Assistance for humanitarian relief and the economic and social rehabilitation of Somalia

Subprogramme 3
Natural disaster reduction

General Assembly resolutions

54/219 International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction: successor arrangements

59/232 International cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon

59/279 Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster

60/125 International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development

60/195 International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

60/196 Natural disasters and vulnerability

Subprogramme 4
Emergency support services

General Assembly resolutions

56/99 Emergency response to disasters

56/109 Strengthening of international cooperation and coordination of efforts to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster

60/13 Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in Pakistan in the aftermath of the South Asian earthquake disaster

60/15 Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster

60/220 Humanitarian assistance and rehabilitation for El Salvador and Guatemala

Subprogramme 5
Humanitarian emergency information and advocacy

General Assembly resolutions

59/279	Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster